Promoting Client Participation and Constructing Decisions in Mental Health Rehabilitation Meetings

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Chapter 2:
Promoting client participation and constructing decisions in mental health rehabilitation meetings

Abstract
The chapter analyses practices by which support workers promote client participation in mental health rehabilitation meetings at the Clubhouse. While promoting client participation, the support workers also need to ascertain that at least some decisions get constructed during the meetings. This combination of goals – promoting participation and constructing decisions – leads to a series of dilemmatic practices, the dynamics of which the chapter focuses on analyzing. The support workers may treat a client's turn retrospectively as a proposal, even if the status of the client's turn as such is ambiguous. In the face of a lack of recipient uptake, the support workers may remind the clients about their epistemic access to the content of the proposal or pursue their agreement or commitment to the proposed plan. These practices involve the support workers carrying primary responsibility over the unfolding of interaction, which is argued to compromise the jointness of the decision-making outcome.

Keywords: Participation, proposals, joint decision-making, mental health rehabilitation, conversation analysis, access, agreement, commitment

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One key form of participation is the right to make joint decisions. In recent decades, the importance of joint decision-making has been highlighted in the field of social and health care, where the client's right to self-determination and empowerment have been emphasized (Epstein et al., 2005). In mental health care, particularly in the United States since the 1970s, this development has been influenced by the political movement of mental health client groups seeking to improve their position and raising the right to decision-making as a matter of human rights (Chamberlin, 1990; Drake, Deegan, & Rapp, 2010). The ideals of "shared decision-making" (Charles, Gafni, & Whelan, 1999; Barry & Edgman-Levitan, 2012) and "collaborative decision-making" (Treichler & Spaulding, 2017) have later become key concepts informing the making of decisions on client care.

In mental health care, the realization of the shared and collaborative decision-making ideals has turned out to be particularly challenging. Some of these challenges may have to do with the individual decision-making capacities of mental health clients (see Ernst & Paulus, 2005; Larquet, Coricelli, Opolczynski, & Thibaut, 2010; Beitinger, Kissling, & Hamann, 2014). Furthermore, some clients have explicitly expressed a wish to leave the decisions about their own treatment in the hands of professionals only (Hickey & Kipping, 1998; Elstad & Eide, 2009). As a result, many professionals' attempts to promote client participation are surrounded by at least some degree of client passivity or resistance. In this chapter, we analyze decision-making sequences in a setting where these kinds of challenges are apparent, while we focus on the support workers' practices to deal with these challenges.

Constructing the outcome of decision-making as a "joint" decision

Joint decision-making is not only a matter of participants distributing their activities during the decision-making process so that each of them has a "share" in it, based on each participant's specific domain of knowledge or expertise. In addition, the construction of the outcome of decision-making as a "joint" decision necessitates that the participants also constantly negotiate the status of their shared activity as a joint decision-making activity. These negotiations not only concern the *content* of the decisions to be made, but also *whether*, *when*, and *on what exactly* the participants are making decisions about in the first place.

Stevanovic (2012) has elucidated these multiple levels of joint decision-making with reference to three components of an accepting or approving response to a proposal. When formulating their ideas about future actions or events as proposals, and not as order or announcements, the speaker treats their co-participants as having a word to say in the realization of these ideas. A proposal can therefore be considered to be the starting point of a joint decision-making sequence. It is then the ways in which the other participants present respond to the proposal that lead the sequence either towards a decision or toward something else. According to Stevanovic (2012), in order to establish a joint decision, the recipients of a proposal need to claim understanding of what the proposal is about (*access*), indicate that the proposed plan is feasible (*agreement*), and demonstrate willingness to treat the plan as binding (*commitment*). Essentially, it is the recipients of the proposal who bear the main responsibility for taking the decision-making sequence forward. This orientation allows the proposal recipient to avoid explicit rejection of proposals, since instead, they can abandon the sequence before a decision has been established (see also Stevanovic, 2015). If the proposer instead pushes the sequence forward, for example, by actively pursuing a response from the recipients, the genuine jointness of the decision-making outcome is compromised. In this way, the nature of any decision-

making outcome is a result of the moment-by-moment sequential unfolding of the decision-making process.

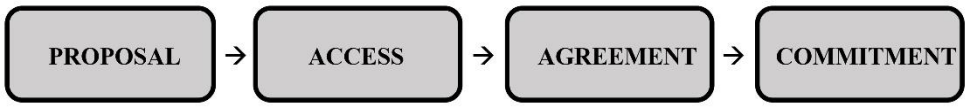

Figure 1. Components of the joint decision-making sequence (Stevanovic, 2012)

The right to propose and decide is a central manifestation of the so-called "deontic authority" (Stevanovic & Peräkylä, 2012). From this perspective, the trajectories of sequences from proposals to the displays of access, agreement and commitment are also a matter of maintaining equality in terms of a symmetrical distribution of power. As Stevanovic (2012; 2015) has argued, establishing such a symmetry can be facilitated by all participants orienting to the responsibility of the recipients in determining the ultimate destiny of the given proposal. But what happens when the recipients may not be trusted to take on this responsibility? This question is what this chapter seeks to shed light on.

The research context

This study was conducted in the context of mental health rehabilitation at the Clubhouse. The Clubhouse movement started in New York in the 1940s, when mental health patients sought to reduce the isolation associated with mental health problems by organizing various communal activities (Hänninen, 2016). Today, the activities at the Clubhouse communities are based on the international Clubhouse model, which seeks to improve mental health clients' quality of life, reduce their need of hospital care, and support their return to work (Hänninen, 2016). In Finland, the Clubhouse is a third-sector player in the mental health rehabilitation service system. Clubhouse communities can be joined without a referral by a mental health professional, but workers at psychiatric hospitals or outpatient clinics typically encourage clients to contact these communities, when the rehabilitation process is to be prolonged and the client's ability to work and functional capacities are threatened.

Clubhouse communities involve both mental health clients and support workers. Clients are called members, and membership of a Clubhouse community is understood to mean that members have the right and obligation to participate in decision-making about communal life. Such an understanding is also in line with the so-called "recovery approach" (Davidson et al., 2005; Hänninen, 2012), which has criticized the traditional medical model of mental illness for its excessive professionalism and promoted an equal relationship between professionals and clients.

Research question

Given the status of joint decision-making as an explicit ideal of the Clubhouse model, on one hand, and the passivity or resistance that often characterizes the behavior of mental health clients in joint decision-making contexts, on the other, in this paper we seek to shed light on the interactional details of this discrepancy. We ask: what are the practices through which support workers at the Clubhouse seek to encourage the clients to contribute to joint decision-making sequences?

Data and method

The data for this study were collected at one Finnish Clubhouse in 2016–2017. Our material consists of weekly video-recorded group meetings of mental health clients and support workers, at which the clients sought to practice their working life skills. The dataset contains a total of 29 meetings, while their duration varied between 30 and 70 minutes. Each meeting involved 2–10 clients and 1–3 support workers, who had undertaken professional training in social work. During the meetings, a wide range of decisions was made, most of which concerned the activities of the group. The names and other participant identifiers used in the analysis of the data transcripts have been anonymized. Transcription symbols and glossing abbreviations are provided in Appendix 1. Our method of investigation was conversation analysis (Sacks & Schegloff, 1973; Schegloff, 2007; Sidnell, 2013), which seeks to unravel the resources through which everyday social life is built (for a more extended discussion, see Chapter 1).

Analysis: Practices to promote participation and construct decisions

In this section, we account for the variation of the support workers' practices across our data collection. In so doing, we use the above-described model of joint decision-making (2012).

Retrospective construction of proposals

As pointed out, the starting point of joint decision-making involves one participant making a proposal for a future action or event. From the perspective of deontic authority, the mere act of making a proposal involves a claim of the right to have a word to say in what will be done. From this it follows that a substantial level of client participation could be immediately achieved if it were the *clients*, and not the support workers, who produced the proposals. In the face of a relative scarcity of client proposals in our data (cf. Chapter 6), support workers occasionally seem to engage in remarkable interactional work to emphasize those elements in the clients' prior talk that could be interpreted as suggestive of plans.

Extract 1a is from a situation where the participants are planning the program for the entire autumn season. Previously, one of the support workers (SW1) has listed the themes discussed by that group during the spring. As one such theme, she has mentioned an activity that involved the group members

making plans for their own rehabilitation. At the beginning of Extract 1a she shifts the discussion to the current situation, when the group should decide what to do next (line 1).

Extract 1a

01 SW1: ↑mutta (.) mitä me tehään ↑tästä eteenpäin.
but (.) what shall we do from now on.

02 (7.0)

03 Arto: **nii onks sitä ny (.) varsinaisesti, (0.2)**
PRT be-Q it-PAR PRT actually
yeah has it been now (.) actually, (0.2)

04 **otettu, (1.0) ninku, (0.5) realisoitu sitä**
take-PPC PRT realize-PPC it-PAR
taken up, (1.0) like, (0.5) realized it

05 **et et et (.) hh näitä ↑toteutettu mi-**
PRT PRT PRT these-PAR realize-PPC
so that (.) these (would have been) realized

06 **mist on puhuttu (0.4) vai.**
what-PAR be talk-PPC or
that we have been talking about (0.4) or.

07 (1.0)

08 SW1: nii et (.) tarkotaksä et niit tavotteita jotka
yeah so (.) do you mean those goals that

09 jokainen asetti sit siellä,
everyone set there,

10 Arto: ↑nii nii ja siis noita että ku tos on noita
yea yea and I mean those that since there are those

11 omien rajojen tunnistaminen
recognizing one's limits

12 stressinsietoo ja tommosii nii jos niitä,
stress resilience and the like so I wonder if these

13 (0.3) niitä ↑testattu tai (.) kokeiltu tai
(0.3) have been tested or (.) tried or

14 ninku että just Anu sano et te olitte tehny
like Anu just said that you had done

15 kokeillu uusii et onko, (1.0) onko sitte,
tried some new so has, (1.0) has there then been,

16 (0.5) (-) (1.0) ketkä täs nyt on jo sitte
(0.5) (-) (1.0) who have now already

```
17        ↑kokeillu kaikkia erilaisia (.) (--)
          tried all kinds of different (.) (--)

18        kiinnostavia hommia,
          interesting stuff,

19        (1.0)

20 SW1:   no se on jääny tietenki vähän ninku
          well it has of course been left sort of like

21        jokaisen omalle vastuulle
          to everyone's own responsibility
```

After SW1's open question (line 1), a long silence ensues (line 2). Finally, one of the clients, Arto, takes a turn, asking if the plans made during the last spring have been implemented (lines 3–6). We interpret Arto's turn as an indirect critical statement about the group's activities in general – about there being "a lot of talk, but little action." The breaks and restarts in Arto's turn, which indicate interactional difficulties, support the interpretation. After a silence (line 7), SW1 requests Arto to clarify his turn (lines 8–9), which he then does in lines 10–18. Similarly to Arto's original turn, also his subsequent clarification turn entails elements that appear critical of the group's activities ("I wonder if these have been tested," lines 12–13). This is also how SW1 orients to Arto's turn as action: after a silence in line 19, she starts to defend the group's activities (lines 20–21). By appealing to each group member's "own responsibility" for the implementation of their plans, SW1 evades the implied criticism that this would have needed to be done by the group.

A moment later, however, Arto's action will be dealt with in another way. In the meanwhile, just before Extract 1b, the group has decided that one of the clients, Masa, will act as the meeting secretary (lines 40–49, not shown in the transcript). Masa, therefore, needs to know what to write in the meeting minutes. Thus, as part of a clarification for Masa in this respect, the other support worker (SW2), who was silent during Extract 1a, makes a reference to Arto's previous talk (lines 50–51).

Extract 1b

```
50 SW2:   ku  mä  aattelin et  tässähän tuli     nyt
          PRT SG1 think-1  PRT here-CLI come-PST now
          because I was thinking that here there just came

51        yksi, (.) yks idea Artolla (.) (--)
          one       one idea MaleName-ADE
          one, (.) one idea by Arto (.) (--)

52        laittaa vähän ranskiksilla sinne ylös (-)
          (we should) write down some bullet points (-)

53        voidaan sit miettiä,
```

```
         we can then think about (them),

54 Masa: mikäs se [oli.
         what was [it

55 SW2:           [elikkä, (1.2) sulla oli vähän ninku
                  [so, (1.2) you had sort of like

56       sitä (.) <oman toiminnan arviointia>
         that (.) evaluation of one's own action

57       (.)

58 Arto: nii [tai nii nii siis mitä tuolta kattoo muuta    ]
         yea [or yea yea I mean what else you can see there]

59 SW2:       [näitten pohjalta työnkuvan arviointi       ]
              [evaluation of profile on the basis of these]

60 Arto: että jos ninku, (0.8) sillee että (.)
         so that if (it is) like, (0.8) so that (.)

61       ninku nyt Maisaki just sano et tekemällä oppii
         like Maisa now just said that you learn by doing

62       ni (.) siin sitte, (0.8) et, (0.5)
         so (.) there then, (0.8) that, (0.5)

63       ite en oo niin (.) noist
         I myself am not that (much) into (.) the kind of

64       (.) teoriajutuista niin,
         (.) theory stuff so,
```

Instead of orienting to Arto's previous talk as a critical statement, SW2 treats it as a proposal: Arto has suggested an "idea" (lines 50–51) that Masa should write down (lines 52–53). Next, Masa asks what Arto's idea was (line 54), which is then responded to by SW2 formulating Arto's idea as a call for the group to engage in some sort of evaluation activities (lines 55–56, 59). Thereafter, Arto takes a turn. The repetitive elements in his turn-beginning ("yea or yea yea I mean," line 58) imply a need for an adjustment to the support worker's prior turn. Instead of explicitly rejecting SW2's interpretation of his previous action, Arto makes a reference to Maisa, who has previously emphasized the importance of practical action instead of "theory stuff" (line 60–64). Thus, while Arto basically repeats his previous point about what may not be optimal in the activities of the group, the element of criticism becomes transformed into an expression of personal preference – something that may also inform the decisions to be made. In this way, Arto has ultimately become an active participant in joint decision-making.

Reminding about access

Evidently, a mere proposal is not enough to establish a joint decision. Instead, as pointed out above, a joint decision requires that the recipients of the proposal work to move the sequence forwards towards the decision. The first component of such approving responses to proposals involves a display of *access* to the content of the proposal. When the recipients fail to recognize what the proposal is about, sometimes it may lead to a *de facto* rejection of the proposal, without this rejection ever surfacing at the level of participants' explicit talk. This interactionally easy and face-saving way of rejecting a proposal is nonetheless dependent on the proposer refraining from pursuing the same proposal any more.

However, what we observed in our data was that, in the face of a lack of recipient uptake, the support workers did *not* abandon their proposals but, instead sought to remind the recipients of their access to the content of the proposal. Extract 2a is a case in point. Previously, one of the support workers (SW2) has mentioned a theme that the group has dealt with at its previous meetings during spring. Now, she suggests that the same theme could also be discussed during the autumn. However, she presents her idea as contingent on the group not experiencing it as excessive repetition (lines 1–7, 9).

Extract 2a

```
01 SW2: mä aattelin et nyt täs on seuraava (.) aihe
        I thought that now here we have the next (.) theme

((lines 2-5 removed))

06      ne on nyt varmaan aika pitkälti siis samantyyppisiä
        now they are certainly to a large extent similar

07      ku tä[ä  e]t mä mietin (.) nyt sitäkin että
        to th[is s]o I wonder (.) now also if

08 SW1:      [mm,]
             [mm,]

09 SW2: tuleeks siit ke:rtausta sitte,
        there will be too much repetition then,

10      (0.7)

11 SW1: mut se ↑näkökulma ↑voi olla >vähä< erilaine↑,
        but the perspective can be somewhat different

12      (0.4) miltä se tu- kuulostaa.
        (0.4) how does it sound.

13 SW2: ni,=
        so,=

14 SW1: =haittaako vaikka tulee kertausta,
```

=do you mind if there will be repetition,

15 (3.0)

16 SW1: **ne jotka on keväällä ollu näit**
they who be spring-ADE be-PPC these-PAR
those who were thinking about these

17 **pohtimassa mitä sanotte.**
think-INF-INE what say-PL2
in the Spring what do you say.

18 (0.4)

19 SW1: **Make tai Sini tai Ai[ri.]**
MaleName or FemaleName or FemaleName
Make or Sini or Ai[ri.]

After SW2's question (line 9), there is a short silence (line 10), after which her co-worker (SW1) supports the idea by pointing out the possible different perspectives to the same theme (lines 11). Thereafter, SW1 requests the group members to take a stance toward the idea: first she poses an open question (line 12) and then a polar question, asking the group members whether they regard repetition as a problem (line 14). Given that both support workers at the meeting have already taken a stance toward the idea, it is obvious that it is the clients who have been addressed by the question. However, none of them reacts. Thus, after a three-second silence (line 15), SW1 directs the question to those clients who could be expected to know exactly what the proposal is about, based on their earlier membership in the group (lines 16–17, 19). In so doing, SW1 reminds the clients about their epistemic access to the content of the proposal. As can be seen in Extract 2b, this support worker's attempt is successful in encouraging client response (see lines 20–22, 24–25 & 28).

Extract 2b

20 Airi: **[ei] hai[ttaa].**
[I] don't [mind].

21 Mika: **[ei h]aittaa.**
[I do]n't mind.

22 **m- mäki kävin sillon kevää[llä] jo.**
I also was there in the Sp[ring] already.

23 SW1: [ni.]
[yea.]

24 Airi: **ei haittaa.**
I don't mind.

```
25 Make: joo,
         yea,

26       (1.0)

27 SW1:  ↑no ni,
         ↑okay,

28       (3.0) ((Sini nods.))

29 Make: .mt mä  oon  vissiin yks (.) yks jäänyväliin.
             SG1 be-1 surely  one     one leave-PPC between
         .mt I guess I have missed one (.) one

30       (1.2)

31 Make: (vain.)
         (only.)

32 SW2:  °okei,°
         °okay,°

33 Airi: .thh mullakaan   ei  oo pahemmin
              SG1-ADE-CLI NEG be bad-ADV-COMP
         .thh neither do I have many
```

Despite the matter that several clients now give a preferred answer to the support worker's polar question about whether the realization of the proposal would be a problem, the further unfolding of the sequence deviates from the trajectory of joint decision-making. Instead of working to establish a joint decision, the clients topicalize the source of their epistemic access to the content of the proposal – they discuss how often each of them has been absent from the group meetings during spring (lines 29, 31 & 33). Thus, although an orientation to and a public display of access to the content of a proposal takes the decision-making sequence substantially forward from the mere stating of a proposal, from the perspective of keeping the focus of discussion on joint decision-making, the act of reminding others about their epistemic access is a risky endeavor. This is because it topicalizes something that is only tangential to the actual proposal content.

More importantly, however, the support workers' insisting on active client participation, paradoxically, compromised the genuine jointness of the decision-making outcome. In giving the clients no option *not* to respond to the proposal, the clients could not use silence as a way to convey reluctance or a lack of interest toward what was being proposed. In this way, the clients lost the option (1) to indicate a rejection of the proposal in an easy and face-saving way and (2) to influence the meta-level decision on whether the idea should be decided on in the first place.

Pursuing agreement

In addition to reminding participants about their epistemic access to the content of the proposal, proposers may sometimes pursue their co-participants' agreement with their ideas quite straightforwardly. This is what happens in Extract 3a, where the participants discuss the so-called "transitional work" – a Clubhouse-created employment program, the aim of which is to assist those Clubhouse members who wish to seek competitive employment in the future. It involves a part-time placement at the employer's place of business, lasting from 6 to 9 months (Valkeapää, Lindholm, Tanaka, Weiste, & Stevanovic, 2019). Here, a support worker (SW1) suggests that a group of Clubhouse members from another community could visit the group to report their experiences of transitional work (lines 1–7; lines 3–7 not shown in the transcript).

Extract 3a

```
01 SW1:  no ↓mitäs te sanotte sit semmoseen
         well what do you say to the kind of (idea) that

02       ku meillähän ↑kävi sitte tossa,
         you know we had (those visitors)

((lines 3-7 removed))

08 Kai:  mä oli siinä (-)=
         I was there (-)=

09 SW1: =↑no ↑sä olit ↑ainaki. (.)
         =↑so ↑at least ↑you were there. (.)

10       mimmonen se sun mielest oli se juttu,
         how was it in your opinion,

11 Kai:  no kylhän se (--) kumminki (.) saa vähä
         well surely it (--) anyway (.) one gets some

12       tietoo tota noin noist (.) ee paikoista ja,
         information erm about those (.) ee places and,

13 SW1:  mm,
         mm,

14 Kai:  tämmöstä mitä siihen vaaditaan ja tämmös[tä::, ]
         kind of what is demanded for that and th[e kind]

15 SW1:                                          [mm-m, ]

16       (.)

17 Kai:  semmosta.
         sort of.
```

```
18 SW1:  jaksaisiksä            kuunnella  sellast
         be.able.to-COND-2+SG2 listen-INF that.kind.of-PAR
         could you bear listening to that kind of (talk)

19       toisteki.
         another.time-CLI
         also another time.

20 Kai:  no::, (0.5) kyl ↑mä↓varmaan jaksaisin.
         PRT         PRT SG1 I.guess be.able.to-COND-2
         we::ll, (0.5) yes I guess I could bear that.

21       ((general laughter))

22 SW1:  kiva.
         nice.
```

In response to SW1's proposal (lines 1–7), Kai reminds others about him having been present at a previous similar event, thus displaying access to the content of the proposal (line 8). Kai, however, refrains from providing any assessment of his experience. Thus, after acknowledging Kai's past presence in the event (line 9), SW1 asks for Kai's assessment of it ("how was it in your opinion," line 10). Kai responds, again refraining from taking a clear position in favor or against the proposed idea. The positive start of the turn (*no kylhän se* "well surely it," line 11) implies that the usefulness of the event is not to be taken for granted (Niemi, 2010). In the continuation of the turn, Kai states that the event was able to provide him "some information" but he refrains from any evaluation of the usefulness of that information (lines 11–12, 14, 17).

While Kai's lack of evaluation of the event could be considered meaningful, this is not the way SW1 treats Kai's turn. Shifting the focus from the past event to a possible analogous future event, she poses a polar question to Kai, which requires him to take a clear position on the proposal ("could you bear listening to that kind of (talk) also another time," lines 18–19). In response to this, Kai produces a somewhat evasive answer ("we::ll, (0.5) yes I guess I could bear that," line 20), where the long-stretched Finnish particle *no* "well" implies some difficulty in producing the answer and the repetition of the verb "bear", which SW1 has (possibly ironically) used in her question, implies that what SW1 has proposed is indeed something that requires "bearing" from him. The other members of the group laugh at Kai's answer (line 21), thus treating it primarily as humor. SW1, nonetheless, seems to treat Kai's response as an acceptance of her proposal: in response to Kai's turn, she utters an evaluative token *kiva* "nice" (line 22), after which a new topic is launched.

Later during the same meeting, the other support worker present at the meeting (SW2) briefly refers to the idea of visitors (lines 73–75, 77 & 79).

Extract 3b

71 SW2: ↑voidaanhan me käydä esimerkiks joku kerta
certainly we could have sometime for Extract

72 sellanen (.) keskustelu että että tota (.)
the kind of (.) discussion that that erm (.)

73 **vaikka sillon jos tulee näitäkin (.) jäseniä**
PRT then if come these-CLI member-PL-PAR
for example then if there will be those (.) members

74 **jotka on, (0.3) sieltä kaupungista**
who-PL be from.there city-ELA
who are, (0.3) from that city

75 **[jotka] on, (0.3) on tota noin niin**
who-PL be be PRT PRT PRT
[who] have, (0.3) have erm

76 SW1: [mm-m,]
[mm-m,]

77 SW2: **käyny [sen,]**
completed [that,]

78 SW1: [mm-m] mm-m,
[mm-m] mm-m,

79 SW2: **tehny siirtymätyöjaksoja** (.)
done transitional work periods (.)

80 ja sitten meillä on
and then we have

In Extract 3b, SW2 refers to the possibility of visitors, but she does not invite new discussion on the matter. Instead, the reference to the visitors is embedded in a discussion about the group's schedule (lines 71–73). The ultimate decision on whether or not to invite visitors is thus treated as open (see the particle *jos* "if", line 73), while the very group in the here and now is *not* treated as the *maker* of that ultimate decision.

As suggested at the beginning of the chapter, the matter that the proposal recipients "voluntarily" take a stance in favor of a proposal serves as a warrant for the substantiality of their acceptance of the proposal, which is a precondition for constructing the outcome of the sequence as a *joint* decision. Voluntariness, however, necessitates that the recipients also have an actual option to refrain from taking such a stance and, in so doing, prevent the sequence from proceeding towards a decision. Thus, the proposer's act of encouraging stance-taking from the proposal recipients has the paradoxical consequence of leading the sequence to an interactional outcome other than a genuinely joint decision.

Pursuing commitment and establishing decisions

As suggested before, a joint decision is established when the recipients of the proposal have expressed their commitment to the proposed action. If the recipients refrain from doing so, the proposer may either abandon the sequence, thus acknowledging the lack of commitment as meaningful, or seek to encourage the recipients' commitment, thus risking the jointness of the decision-making outcome. The latter option is pursued in Extract 4, in which the group has previously discussed how the group should be named. At the beginning of the extract, one of the support workers (SW1) suggests that all the name alternatives that the group members can come up with could be collected over the following week by writing them on a piece of paper on the wall (lines 1–17; lines 3–17 not shown in the transcript).

Extract 4a

```
01 SW1:  mitä jos laitetaan sellanen (.) lappu
         what if we would put the kind of (.) paper

02       johonki tohon seinälle
         somewhere there on the wall

((lines 3-17 removed))

18 Kati: no o:nhan se hyvä jos niit on ninku (.)
         well it is certainly good if there are those (.)

19       seinäl nähtävissä niitä nimiehdotuksia ni,
         visible on the wall those name suggestions so,

20       (0.2) on siin sit ainaki sillee (.)
         (0.2) at least then they are there like (.)

21       vähä mie°ttiä° (1.0) #et oisko sit
         a bit to be thought about (1.0) that would it be

22       joku muu ku se äs tee# valme°nnus sitte°
         something else than the ST-couching then

23       (7.0)

24 SW1:  sä  ehdotat   että kysytään?
         SG2 suggest-2 PRT  ask-PASS
         you suggest that we ask?

25       (1.0)

26 Kati: ↑n::iin on se hy[vä v]armaan nii.
         PRT     be it good  I.guess  PRT
         ↑ye:a:h it is go[od I] guess yea.

27 SW1:                  [nii,]
```

[yea,]

In response to SW1's proposal, a client, Kati, assesses the proposal in a positive way (lines 18–22), thus bringing the sequence a major step forward toward a decision. However, Kati's turn is followed by a long silence (line 23), after which the support worker reformulates Kati's positive stance toward the idea, inviting her to confirm it ("you suggest that we ask," line 24). After a one-second silence (line 25), Kati provides such confirmation ("ye:a:h it is good I guess yea," line 26), but her utterance involves signs of hesitance: a long stretch in the prosodic production of the particle *niin* "yeah" and the use of the epistemic adverb *varmaan* "I guess". Given the lack of substantial commitment to the proposed action, SW2 redirects the request for commitment to the entire group (line 28).

Extract 4b

28 SW2: mitä muut sanoo.
what do the others say.

29 (5.0)

30 Make: hiljasta.
silent.

31 SW1: hiljasta o(h)n heh näin o. ((laughter))
silent i(h)t is heh that's right.

32 (7.0)

33 SW2: **no ↑mä ehdotan kans sitä äänesty[s,**
PRT SG1 suggest-1 also it-PAR voting
well ↑I also suggest that votin[g

34 SW1: [↑mm,
[↑mm,

35 (1.0)

36 SW2: tai sitä ehdote- eh[dotus]asiaa.
or that voting- vot[ing t]hing.

37 SW1: [↑nii.]
[↑yea.]

38 SW2: mennäänks sillä.
shall we go with that.

39 SW1: ↑mennään sillä. haluuksä Kati tehä
↑let's go with that. do you Kati want to make

40 sellasen jonku lapun tuohon seinään.
some kind of paper on that wall.

After SW2's question, two long silences emerge (lines 29 & 32) – an awkward state of affairs that is also explicitly addressed in the conversation (lines 30–31). Finally, SW2 – the colleague of the maker of the original proposal – announces her positive stance toward the proposed idea (lines 33 & 36). With the particle *kans* "also" (line 33), she casts her stance-taking as second to that of Kati, thus working towards constructing the emerging outcome of the sequence as a collective one. Thereafter, SW1 and SW2 together bring the decision-making process to completion by a series of displays of commitment (lines 38–39), which is followed by a request from SW1 to Kati to implement the decision ("do you Kati want to make some kind of paper on that wall," lines 39–40). Thus, even if one of the clients has taken a positive stance toward the support worker's proposal "in principle", the actual emergence of the decision is largely a result of the collaborative effort of the two support workers.

Conclusions

This chapter has described how support workers in mental health rehabilitation meetings at the Clubhouse seek to encourage the client members of the community to participate in making decisions about the communal life. While promoting client participation, the support workers also need to ascertain that at least some decisions get constructed during the meetings. As we have shown in our analysis, this combination of goals – promoting participation and constructing decisions – leads to a series of dilemmatic practices occurring at different points in the decision-making sequence. The support workers may treat a client's turn retrospectively as a proposal, even if the status of the client's turn as such is ambiguous. In the face of a lack of recipient uptake, the support workers may remind the clients about their epistemic access to the content of the proposal or pursue their agreement or commitment to the proposed plan. These practices involve the support workers carrying more responsibility over the unfolding of interaction and the emergence of decisions than the clients do.

As has been repeatedly argued in our analysis, the idea of support workers carrying a relatively large share of responsibility over the unfolding of interaction and the emergence of decisions compromises the genuine jointness of the decision-making outcome. Nonetheless, the support workers' conduct can be accounted for with reference to two general perspectives, which we will briefly attend to below.

First, the support workers' conduct can be accounted for with reference to the nature of social interactional practices as fundamentally *cooperative* (e.g., Tomasello, 2009). Thus, the unequal distribution of responsibility in interaction is not at all exceptional in human social life. Instead, it is common that a more skilled participant, on demand, takes an active role in solving problems of interaction (e.g., Goffman, 1955; Goodwin, 1995; Laakso, 2012).

Such collaboration has been extensively studied in situations that involve asymmetry in the participants' communication skills, for example, in second-language interactions (Kurhila, 2006) or in conversations with participants with aphasia (Goodwin, 1995; Laakso, 2015) or hearing impairment (Scarinci, Worral & Hickson, 2008). The findings from our data can thus also be accounted for with reference to the support workers simply compensating for the difficulties mental health clients have to participate in joint decision-making, In so doing, they helped to maintain the smooth unfolding of interaction and allowed for the emergence of at least some decisions during the meetings.

Second, the support workers' conduct can be understood from the perspective of pedagogy. Their practices reflect what Vehviläinen (2014) has referred to as a *supporting orientation* in counselling, in which the professional is active in maintaining both the participants' interaction and the client's involvement in it. From this perspective, the support workers' practices can also be conceptualized with reference to the notions of *scaffolding* (Snow, 1977) and *the zone of proximal development* (Vygotsky, 1978), when it is essential to treat the learners as somewhat more competent than they actually are. In mental health rehabilitation group meetings, this would entail the clients also participating in the kind of decision-making processes that they could not participate in independently – without the support workers' assistance (Vygotsky, 1978). Arguably, learning happens when the clients become socialized into the practices of the group and their developing joint decision-making skills become independent of the support workers' assistance (see John-Steiner & Mann, 1996). From this perspective, a specific challenge in the context of group meetings is generated by the differences of competence between group members and the changes of competence associated with the processes of illness recovery. In our data, such challenges might have been at stake, for example, in Extracts 4a and 4b, in which only one client participated in the decision-making, with the other clients remaining silent even in the face of long and awkward silences.

While there are ways to make sense of the support workers' conduct during the mental health rehabilitation group meetings at the Clubhouse, potential drawbacks of such conduct are also inevitable. As repeatedly pointed out in our analysis, one such drawback has to do with the opportunity to reject proposals in an easy and face-saving way. While an explicit rejection of a proposal can be a challenging conversational act to accomplish in any situation, such a rejection is even more difficult to produce in situations, such as the ones analyzed in this chapter, when the proposer displays a lot of investment in his or her proposal by actively pursuing it in the face of a lack of recipient uptake. Sometimes there may be *two* support workers aligning with each other in advancing a proposal, which makes a rejection of a proposal an even more demanding action to produce. Another possible drawback has to do with the "meta-level" management of the joint decision-making interaction in the kinds of informal decision-making settings in which

the decision-making agenda should be just as negotiable as the content of the decisions to be made. While the mere act of making a proposal entails a claim about its relevance for the group, the chance to respond to the proposal with silence is a way to display implicit resistance toward such a claim. This why the practices of promoting participation are inherently dilemmatic.

The practices to promote client participation are thus inevitably a matter of power and control, not only over the *content* of the decisions to be made, but also over *whether*, *when*, and *on what* decisions should be made in the first place. This inherently dilemmatic nature of promoting participation is worth keeping in mind especially in the high-stakes decision-making situations where the genuine "jointness" of joint decision-making is of particular importance to the client's physical or mental well-being.

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